

Amador Polar Bears Swim Team



Handbook

"We're cool in the pool"

Encouraging swimming in a manner, which provides recreation, self-discipline, good sportsmanship, and competition, in the context of a "full family" experience for the swimmers.

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AMADOR SWIM TEAM

Welcome to the Amador Polar Bears Swim Team. This handbook covers general information that will enable you to understand the way Amador Swim Team functions in itself and within the Mother Lode Conference of The Northern California Swim League. This is not a complete list, but covers the highlights, bylaws and policies of both organizations. A complete list of Team and League Bylaws and U. S. Swimming handbook can be obtained from the Team Secretary.

I. ORGANIZATION/PHILOSOPHY

The Amador Swim Team (Team) was established in 1973 to provide area children the opportunity to swim competitively. The Team is a recreational team with primary emphasis on Fun and Fitness. We encourage swimming in a manner which provides recreation, self-discipline, good sportsmanship, and competition in the context of a "full family" experience for the swimmers. The Team is a non-profit organization which relies on a strong parent organization to operate the Team and raise financial support.

We provide excellent coaching, equipment and facilities for as many as 200 swimmers in Amador County. A permanent home for equipment, trophies and records will more firmly establish the Team as a valuable entity worthy of community support. A long term, committed partnership with a pool facility should allow an expansion of the rigorous practice schedules to improve the skill levels and swimming experience for the greatest number of swimmers. The involvement of parents as members of the Standing Committees and the Board together with involvement of the Amador County community are both important to the accomplishment of our Team's goals.

- A. The Amador Swim Team is governed by a Board of Directors based on a set of by-laws which are available upon request. We are also a member of the Northern California Swim League and by-laws and policies are adhered to.
- B. Voting members of the Board of Directors include President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, League Representative, Volunteer Coordinator, Computer Admin and Member at Large.
- C. There will be at least one general membership meeting where Team business is discussed and the following year's Board is elected. One vote per family of a registered swimmer is allotted for balloting.

To divide the duties of running a first class swim team and support the Board with specific critical tasks, the following standing committees and committee's charters or responsibilities have been established. The chair, membership roster, and charter of these committees will be changed by the Board as needed to accomplish the Board's goals. Committee Chairs are an important part of all Board decision-making; if not a Board member already, they should be present at Board meetings to report progress. The Committee Chairs may be assigned authority to act on behalf of the Board from time to time as described in Board meeting minutes.

Training Committee:

Learn from the past experiences and tell the new people; written job pointers and lists would help. Examples are: Age group coordinators, timers, judges, writers, snack bar, treasurer, president, etc. Recruit and be sure all bases are covered for each event. Arrange for training prior to or at events as needed. Coordinate with our League Representative to keep current on League standards for swim meets.

Facilities and Equipment Committee:

Provide direct and effective contact with pool owners and managers to make the Team's activities at their pool as smooth and productive for both parties as possible. Responsible for security, storage and maintenance of all physical assets. Identify, design and propose facility improvements to the Board for 1, 3, and 5 years in the future by July 15th each year. Implement approved projects. Keep future growth needs in mind; consider alternate facilities periodically.

Membership Committee:

Recruit new swimmers and retain current swimmers. Maintain the Team Roster (parents, phone, address, emails, etc.). Welcome and encourage new families - "show them the ropes" for a good family experience. Nominate officers to the Board; recruit the best officers possible. Create an optimum succession plan for Team leadership. Also responsible for collecting swimmer fees and paper work; recommend action to Board regarding exceptional cases. Coordinate with Board Secretary to provide families with timely newsletters concerning activities and Board actions.

Public Relations Committee:

Gather event results and photos for submission to the media. Cultivate media contacts to further the mission of the Team. Expand network of contacts for benefit of Team activities and fundraisers (pass on names to Fund Raisers). Keep history of Team records, stories, photos, etc. Produce professional image presentation pieces (statistics, anecdotes, photos, graphs, long range plans, videos, flyers) for use by Board or other committees.

Fund Raising Committee:

Given the Treasurer's 1, 3, and 5-year cash forecasts, present a plan to meet the income needs with a "Board approved" combination of the following elements by July 15th of each year:

- Swimmer Fees
- Traditional fundraisers (snack bar, lap swims, etc.)
- Medium Level Sponsors - High Level Sponsors

Prepare a campaign; research the candidates, recruit additional experts and opinions to present to the Board for consensus. Execute campaign to sell Team to Medium and High Level Sponsors on an annual, renewing basis where possible. For traditional fundraisers this committee will recruit workers, set policies to maximize profitability and control inventory, etc. subject to Board approval.

II. BEGINNING SWIMMERS

Each year swim team openings become available for beginning swimmers in the younger age groups (ages 4 - 8). The Amador Polar Bears Swim Team provides a competitive program for those interested in developing advanced swimming skills. Parents with beginning swimmers who are comfortable in the water, but cannot swim, are welcome to register. If you choose to register your child, the team will provide group-swimming lessons for the first six weeks of practice. During this initial instruction period, swimmers must follow instructions and demonstrate progress. Approximately three weeks into the season, the Head Coach will review progress of each beginning swimmer with a parent. In order for the instruction period to be effective, parent(s) must bring their child to practice a minimum of four (4) times per week, provide encouragement to the child during practices, but not interfere with practice. By May 9th swimmers must be capable of swimming one pool length *without* aid of floatation devices. *Children who cannot meet this requirement will no longer be allowed to practice or compete with the team.* They may rejoin the team practices when this capability is demonstrated. ***No refunds of any nature will be provided.***

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Swimmer age groups are: 6 & under, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 and 15-18.
- B. Team suits are selected by the Board. A team suit is mandatory.
- C. During swim meets and practices, no provisions are made for the safety of swimmers outside pool areas. Parents are reminded that Amador Swim Team does not take responsibility for children not on the swim team.
- D. League meet events are listed below. Events are done in the order listed.

DISTANCE	EVENT	YARDS	AGE
	Co-ed Free Relay	100	6/under
	Medley Relay	100	7-10
	Medley Relay	200	11-18
	Individual Medley	100	9-18
	Freestyle	25	6/under-10
	Freestyle	50	11-18
	Backstroke	25	6/under-10
	Backstroke	50	11-18
	Long Free	50	7-10
	Long Free	100	11-18
	Breaststroke	25	7-10
	Breaststroke	50	11-18
	Butterfly	25	7-10
	Butterfly	50	11-18
	Free Relay	100	7-10
	Free Relay	200	11-18

Note: These events can change in non-league meets.

E. The Head Coach(es) will have the final authority in the method used to instruct the swimmers.

F. The coaches have the authority to discipline any member of the team for disobedience, improper conduct, failure to attend a meet without prior notification to the coach, or failure to attend practice without a reasonable excuse.

IV. SWIMMER ELIGIBILITY

A. Age is determined as of June 15th.

B. Swimmers who turn 19 before June 15th are not eligible.

C. During League season, teams and swimmers may not swim U.S.S. meets. (If you are a participant in a U.S.S. team or have been in the last 60 days prior to the season, check with the coach to verify eligibility.)

BYLAWS OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SWIM LEAGUE

SWIMMER ELIGIBILITY

Section 11.03. Events Causing Ineligibility

(a) If, between the time period commencing on February 1 and continuing through the completion of all four conference championship meets, an individual:

(i) Swims in any United States Swimming-sanctioned meet; or

(ii) Participates in any stroke-and-turn clinic in February or which does not comply with Section 12.06; or

(iii) Practices with, or competes for, any swimming team other than the swimmer's Team; then said individual shall be ineligible to register and participate (or continue participating, as the

case may be) in the League swimming season occurring in said calendar year.

(b) For the period commencing February 1 and ending March 31 an individual shall be ineligible if that individual participates in any swim practice at the direction or supervision of any coach. For purposes of this section “direction” or “supervision” shall include any oral or written directions given by a coach to a swimmer.

(c) Sections 11.03(a) and (b) notwithstanding, an individual will remain eligible to participate in a League swimming season if the individual participates on any of the following teams at any time between February 1 and the end of the League's swimming season:

(i) *High school swimming teams;*

(ii) *intercollegiate (junior college, community college, college or university) swimming teams;*

(iii) *Water polo or synchronized swimming teams;*

(iv) *Another Team of this League provided that either the individual's participation is limited to attendance at stroke-and-turn clinics sponsored by said other member Teams or the individual complies with Section 11.04 of these Bylaws;*

(v) *A team which is a member of another recreational league, provided that said team has not practiced during the time period commencing on February 1 and running through March 31, and further that the individual complies with Section 11.05 of these Bylaws.*

(d) A participant who becomes ineligible after the League swimming season commences shall immediately cease participation in all League swimming meets remaining in the season. All points scored by the participant prior to the date of his ineligibility shall remain valid and in full force and effect. If a participant competes in a League meet while ineligible, all points scored by the participant and any relay of which the participant was a member shall be rendered null and void, and the participant shall be deemed disqualified from all said events.

V. REGISTRATION RULES

A. A notice will be provided to the previous year's swim team members prior to registration day.

B. New swimmers and previous year's swim team members will be allowed to sign up between registration day and the first practice in April, but, **MUST BE REGISTERED/PAID BEFORE ENTERING THE WATER.**

C. Registration fees are **not refundable** after a swimmer has swum the first practice (*been in the water*).

D. Exceptions to the Registration Rules may only be made with the Amador Polar Bears Swim Team Board approval.

E. Registration fees for the swim season are posted on the team website: www.amadorpolarbears.com.. These fees include championship fees and possibly coupon books. Team gear is at an additional cost.

F. All new swimmers must provide a copy of their birth certificate when registering.

VI. MEET RULES AND GUIDELINES

A. GENERAL POOL/DECK RULES

1. No smoking or alcoholic beverages.
2. No profanity or abusive language.
3. No animals (with the exception of service animals).
4. No food (except at swim meets with an open snack bar).
5. No obstruction of the orderly conduct of a meet.
6. Must abide by general rules posted at pool site.
7. Good sportsmanship and reasonable decorum is required of all officials, swimmers and spectators.
8. No Fighting.
9. No Drugs.
10. No Cell Phones.

B. GENERAL MEET RULES

1. The U.S.S. Handbook is the guide used for judging strokes.
2. A "no false start" rule is in effect for ages 11 and up.
3. No coaching from the deck during an event. This rule shall not prevent encouragement and cheering by other team members, coaches, and parents. Cheering by parents working as meet officials cannot impair their ability to perform their jobs. Coaching, as stated above, is not allowed except to assist physically or mentally handicapped swimmers provided permission of the Meet Referee is secured in advance. It shall not be considered "coaching from the deck" for a coach to shout cadences or move along the deck as long as the coach does not enter the start or finish areas for an event, hinder stroke-and-turn judges or other meet officials.
4. Enforcement of the above rules is at the Meet Referee's sole discretion. The Referee can enforce the above rules by either:
 - a) *Warning then expulsion, or*
 - b) *Immediate expulsion*

C. SWIMMER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Swimmers must participate in three practices in the week prior to a meet and at least 10 practices prior to the first meet. Swimmers who cannot attend the minimum number of practices because of family, school, or conflicts with other sports must notify the coach.
2. All swimmers or parents must sign up for a swim meet online by the listed due date and time order for the swimmer to participate in a meet.
3. Swimmers/parents must notify their Head Coach promptly when a swimmer cannot attend a meet for which they are scheduled. Swimmers who sign up for and are placed in a meet but fail to make roll call without a satisfactory reason as determined by their Head Coach may be restricted from participating in the next scheduled meet.
4. If a swimmer is not present at a meet forty-five minutes prior to the official starting time, he/she may be scratched from the meet and considered absent. Individual situations will be handled at the discretion of the coaching staff and computer meet personnel.
5. Swimmers who *use profanity or abusive language* during a meet or practice *will not be allowed to participate in the next meet.*
6. A swimmer who *does not swim an event*, in which he is registered, will be scratched from the rest of the meet.

7. MEET CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

- a) *A. Swimmers are required to be at meets on time. Check-in will be 6:30 am unless otherwise notified. Scratch session starts at 7:00am. The scratch session is the final set-up for the day's events and swimmers not checked in will be scratched and not allowed to swim. Please allow*

for adequate travel time for arrival prior to 6:30AM. Arrive early to allow time to park and find the check-in table.

D. LEAGUE MEET (DUAL) PLACEMENTS

1. For dual meets a swimmer may enter any 3 individual events plus 2 relays.
2. Unofficial heats may be added by the coach of each team up to limits set by the home team.
3. The Head Coach(s) will place swimmers in league meets based on best times and time combinations. The Head Coach(s) will maximize the number of swimmers participating in a meet through utilizing extra heats and additional relay teams in relay events.
4. Swimmers may move up in age groups during a meet but must stay in that age group for the entire meet. Swimmers in relays are exempted. However, bumping an eligible swimmer in an event or relay with a swimmer from a younger age group is forbidden.
5. At the discretion of the Head Coach(s), swimmers with less than three practices in the week prior to a meet and less than 10 practices prior to the first meet may be restricted from swimming in a meet.
6. The Head Coach(es) will give slower swimmers priority when placements are made for non-league meets.

VII. ELIGIBILITY FOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

- A. Swimmers must participate officially in at least two league dual league meets (meets with 2 teams) during the regular season.
- B. Swimmers must have a time from either 1) a League meet, 2) a practice meet, or 3) a time trial conducted by a club official for each event to be entered.
- C. Qualifying times for the individual Medley and long free championship events will be set during the season.
- D. Any swimmer who qualifies for the finals in an event but fails to swim in the final event without the permission of the Meet Referee shall be barred from competing in any other events during Championships and the next qualified swimmer will take the barred swimmer's place.
- E. All eligibility rules are governed by the League and are subject to change.

VIII. AMADOR POLAR BEARS SWIM TEAM AWARDS

The Amador Polar Bears Swim Team awards its swimmers for participation, effort and competition. Awards are in six categories: Meet Ribbons, Participation Award, High Point Award, Most Improved Swimmer, Coaches' Award, and Record Breaker.

- A. Meet Ribbons. Meet Ribbons are awarded for all league and non-league meets. Ribbons are awarded to all swimmers who compete in individual and relay events except to those swimmers who do not finish or are disqualified. The home team supplies all ribbons. Ribbons are not awarded for intersquad meets.
- B. Participation Award. This award is earned by swimmers who are regular participants in the Amador Swim program. To earn this award, a swimmer must compete (on a relay or individual event) in two (2) meets during the swim season. Meets include league meets, non-league meets and championships. Coaches' selections for league meets are based on a swimmer's performance and practice attendance. Slower swimmers will be given priority when placements are made for non-league events. Intersquad meets will not count toward the participation award.

- C. High Point Award. Awarded to the swimmer in each age group with the highest accumulative points for the season. Participation in championships is mandatory to win this award.
- D. Most Improved Swimmer. This award recognizes the most improved swimmer in each age group. The award is based on a calculation of the difference between a starting time and the swimmer's best time of the season. Starting times are established using 1) the previous year's best time in an event, 2) if item 1 is not available, a time of an event of the same stroke of a short distance, multiplied by 2.2, and 3) if items 1 and 2 are not available, the first League or non-League time of the year will be used. Participation in championships is mandatory to win this award.
- E. Coaches' Award. The Coaches' Award will be awarded to a swimmer in each age group who demonstrates an overall positive attitude in their approach to the sport. Participation in championships is mandatory to win this award.
- F. Record Breakers. Team members who break team records will receive a certificate of achievement. Participation in championships is mandatory to win this award.

IX. NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SWIM LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS AWARDS

- A. Medals for finals winners:
 - 1. First place - gold medal with red, white, blue drape.
 - 2. Second place - silver medal with red, white, blue drape.
 - 3. Third place - bronze medal with red, white, blue drape.
 - 4. Fourth place - bronze medal with green drape.
 - 5. Fifth place - bronze medal with yellow drape.
 - 6. Sixth place - bronze medal with purple drape.
- B. Blue ribbons will be given to each heat winner and a participation ribbon will be given to each swimmer who has not won any ribbons during championships.
- C. A certificate of achievement will be given to any swimmer who breaks a league record.
- D. A high point trophy will be awarded for a boy and girl in each age group.
- E. Awards will be given by the League to the club with the best conference dual meet record for the regular season (with ties decided in favor of the club that won the tied team's dual meet between the tied teams).
- F. An award will be given by the League to the club with the highest point total at each championship.

X. NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SWIM LEAGUE RECORDS

League records are available during the season.

XI. AMADOR POLAR BEARS SWIM TEAM BOARD OBLIGATIONS

The Swim Team Board shall be responsible for and have sole authority to:

- A. Establish rules, regulations and policies consistent with the Bylaws of the Team.
- B. Interpret and enforce the Bylaws and all applicable rules and regulations of the Amador Polar Bears Swim Team and Northern California Swim League.
- C. Adopt an annual budget setting forth anticipated revenues and expenditures.
- D. Create and maintain a fund to finance the activities of the Team and to expend funds on behalf of the Team.

- E. Employ, as required, coaches and other employees as deemed desirable and necessary to carry out the purposes of the Team.
- F. Insure proper accounting of fiscal transactions and accurate reporting to the members.
- G. Discipline members and/or participants for violation of Team rules, regulations and/or By laws. Such discipline may entail suspension from the Team.
- H. Insure proper registration of all participants.
- I. Appoint committees.
- J. Hold elections during Awards Ceremony for following year's officers.

XII. NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SWIM LEAGUE TEAM ALIGNMENTS

Please see the league website for current information: www.norcalswimleague.com.

XIII. MEET RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SWIMMERS AND PARENT VOLUNTEERS:

All swimmers and volunteers are required to check in, upon arrival, before the beginning of each meet. Check in time will be given in the newsletter prior to each meet that will also include directions to the meet. A check in table will be set up for immediate check in upon arrival. **Swimmers that do not check in on time will be scratched.** Once a swimmer is scratched from their events, they will not be allowed to swim in that meet. It is imperative that meets start on time. Often meets must be completed by a specific time because the pool opens to the public.

VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTIONS:

Note! There are 88 volunteer shifts for each home meet and 48 volunteer shifts for each away meet that must be filled by Amador Team Parents.

Each swim family will be required to have one parent volunteer for at least 1 shift at each home and away meet. Each family will also be required to work 2 shifts during swim championships. There are many jobs which do not require any previous experience or knowledge.

SET UP CREW

Set the meets events, set up canopies, tables, chairs, and rope off designated areas if required. Make sure all flags and lane ropes are set-up accordingly. This is done the night before for home meets. It's a great choice if you like physical work or you just want to get your commitment done early and relax during the meet.

CLEAN UP CREW

Help at the end of the meet to take down all of the tents, tables, chairs, etc. and clean up the facility. If you're not a fan of crowds this is a great option since the work takes place after all of the swimmers have gone home and things are quieter and calmer. As the last folks there you also often get to take home any perishable foods – pastries and whatnot – that are left over from the snack bar!

ANNOUNCER

This is a great job for someone with a strong voice who's not afraid of the microphone. A sense of humor is also always welcome! You will call the swimmers to the ready bench, announce the names of the swimmers in each event, and work with the Starter/Referee to keep the meet moving quickly and smoothly. No special training required.

HEAD SCORER & READER/COLORADO OPERATOR

Like working with computers? Keep track of the score as the meet progresses by entering scores in the time computer. At the end of the meet you will copy the meet results to a disk and forward results to the league via the mail box. Furthermore, you will generate a hard copy of the meet

results for the visiting team. Training provided. This job puts you on deck with a front row seat for all the action – in the shade!

HOSPITALITY

Help keep energy levels high for the many volunteers! Deliver snacks and drinks to coaches and timers throughout the day. Every parent is well-qualified for this job!

RUNNERS

Always thinking that you need to get out and exercise a little more? This job is for you. Runners are responsible for delivering all of the paperwork for the meet. They pick up timer sheets from the computer operators and distribute them to the appropriate lanes then retrieve timer sheets from lanes and return them to the computer operators for final confirmation of race results. They also post heat and lane assignments for events, and hang up the final results after races have been completed. Lots of movement! Great exercise!

STROKE AND TURN JUDGES

Judges must attend a clinic to train in swimming rules and execution of strokes and turns. S & T judges are the only persons allowed to disqualify a swimmer for improper stroke or turn. They do their best to be fair to all competitors, giving the benefit of the doubt to the swimmer. Judges fill out DQ slips and give completed slips to the runners, to be turned in to the scoring table immediately. Bring a hat, this job is on deck!

LANE TIMERS

There are three timers per lane and one back up timer per team. Timers meet with the starter before the meet begins to check watches and go over the rules. Start the watch when you see the smoke of a gun or see the flash of the timing system light. Stop the watch when the swimmer completes the stroke. This is the most popular meet job among new swim parents. You get to encourage swimmers as they get ready to race, congratulate them on their finish, and be a part of all the action all while sitting in the shade and being served drinks and snacks by the hospitality crew!

TEAM PARENT FOR BOYS OR GIRLS

This is a great job for parents of babies and toddlers since you can keep them with you. Typically you will sign up to take care of swimmers just like your child, their teammates that you already know from practices. For example, if you are the parent of an 8 year old boy you will sign up to be the 7/8 boys team parent. You will have a list of all swimmers and their races for your group. Keep track of which events are coming up and gather the children before their event is called. You will escort them to the ready bench on time, assist with caps and goggles, and help organize the relay teams. If you've ever called children to come in from playing in the yard you are trained to do this job!

VOLUNTEER TABLE

Assist the volunteer coordinator throughout the day, but especially in the morning before the meet, to check in volunteer parents and swimmers. You get to see many team family members by signing in volunteers and making name tags. Once everyone for a shift is checked in you can take a walk and check to see where assistance may be needed.

SNACK BAR

The snack bar is a great place to work if you're not interested in watching the whole meet, but you're still on deck and it's usually possible to step away for a minute to watch your swimmer(s) race. Snack bar sales are an extremely important fundraiser for the team and you get to interact a lot with both kids and parents in this job. Volunteers are needed to set up, cook and serve food, and clean up.

PARKING ATTENDANT

Parking at Detert Park is very limited. During home meets we need parking attendants to direct traffic and ensure people park in the designated spaces to help maintain a good relationship with our neighborhood businesses. You will be an ambassador for our team, directing visitors to the

check-in table and camping areas as well. You will complete this job before the meet starts, so feel free to sit back and enjoy the meet!

APPAREL TABLE

Retail sales! Sell Polar Bear merchandise to help raise funds for our team. You'll have a front row seat in the shade for every meet. Adults only, please.

HEAD TIMER

You get to watch all of the starts and finishes from one of the best spots in the house as the head timer. Your job is to stand at the edge of the pool area and activate two stopwatches at the start of each heat. If timers in any lane fail to start their own stopwatch, or if there are any malfunctions with the stopwatches in any lane, you trade watches with the given lane so that they have an accurate watch time to use for that race. Some training needed.

STARTER

The Starter meets with the timers before the meet begins to check all stopwatches and goes over the rules of timing. He/she starts each race by (1) Calling to swimmers, "Swimmers step up to the block," (2) asking the timers if they are ready, "Timers are you ready?" (3) starts the race with, "Take your mark," then pushes the timing system button to sound the start. The starter needs to keep the meet running, ensuring that he/she is in sync with the announcer on event number and heat. This puts you on the deck in the middle of the meet with a great view!

READY BENCH PARENT

If you are skilled at herding groups of children around this job is tailor-made for your talents. Help supervise swimmers in the designated area just before being called to the ready bench and get them lined up by lane assignments. The parent will have a list of the swimmers and their events.

RIBBON WRITER

Apply the swimmers race times to a label on the ribbons (or write names and times on the label if the computer is not printing) and file them in the appropriate folder. This is another straightforward job with no special training required.

XIV. AMADOR MEET SCHEDULE

Please see the team website for current information.

XV. AMADOR SWIM TEAM PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Practice will be held at Jackson City pool at Detert Park. Please see the team website for current information.

XVI. SWIM TEAM BOARD & COACHES

Please see the team website for current information.

XVII. COACHES

Please see the team website for current information.

Any announcements, schedule changes, and modifications to this handbook will be posted/updated on the TEAM HOMEPAGE at: www.amadorpolarbears.com